



## Suffolk Chamber of Commerce

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We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

**Suffolk Chamber of Commerce**

Signed: *F. Dignum* Date: 6/9/19

Position: **Chief Executive**



# The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom

Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

## **Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant**

1.1 We, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are that:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen.
- In some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate, especially for the injured or bereaved.

## **Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment**

2.1 Suffolk Chamber of Commerce recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- Promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces friendly organisation. This will be delivered through prominent inclusion of this commitment on our website which has c. 250,000 unique views each year, our monthly online e-zine which is distributed to 6500 business people and the Quarterly 'Chamber Voice' print publication to 3000.
- Whilst Suffolk Chamber of Commerce is not a major employer, in itself, it has a significant 'reach' throughout our County with 1100+ active members across the spectrum of the business community and we affirm our support towards the employment of veterans, young and old. We support the work of the military's Career Transition Partnership which aims to establish a tailored employment pathway for Service Leavers.
- Recognising the need to also support the employment of Service spouses and partners.
- Agreeing that employers should endeavour to offer a degree of flexibility in granting Leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after an Operational deployment.
- Seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including by accommodating their training and deployment where possible.
- offering support to Suffolk based Cadet units, where appropriate and feasible.

- Actively participating in Suffolk's Armed Forces Day events.
- By being actively involved with the Suffolk Employer Engagement Group through a Suffolk Chamber of Commerce employee. (Colonel [Retired] M Biegel OBE DL)